7:Tobe C,T-3 (1959)1960 AV7 Burusho AV7
Hunza

were there, they would have been noticed. 249

It is also possible that from a distance of one or two miles, one might confuse a field of alfalfa hay or barley or wheat and, with golden heads when ripe and the sun's rays striking them, what was grain might resemble flowers, but I think I am well enough versed in plant lore to be able to make the distinction.

I want my readers to bear in mind also that most of my traveling from Gilgit to Baltit was done on Nagir territory.

The reason these bits of color were most conspicuous was obviously because of the practically total absence of anything that resembled flowers—or a bit of brightness.

The Mir answered my question about the growing of poppies as follows, "Yes, some of our farmers are growing poppies but I am going to put a stop to it." 249 276 656

I waited for him to continue with keen interest.

"It appears," he went on, "that some of the people have begun to take to smoking opium . . . and fearing this insidious bad habit will take root, I'm going to ban the growing of this plant."

I did not mention it to him then or since, but somehow I had overheard (perhaps at one of the parties in Gilgit where a group of the roundabout notables had gathered) that opium had been drifting in from some locations and commanding fairly good prices. It also struck me that the Chinese border, being close at hand, might prove to be a very appropriate market for the produce that they would get from the poppy plants.

I did not ask if there were any restrictions against the producing of opium, apart from the fact that the Mir was going to ban it for protection of his people. I do not know whether anyone could prevent the Hunzans or the Nagirwals from growing these colorful plants.

661

661 EXPLOITATION--exercise of their power by holders of political office to further personal goals, whether materialistic, psychological, or ideological; perquisites of office (e.g., exceptional income and material comforts, special sexual or marital privileges, unusual honors or deference); use of office for self-aggrandizement (e.g., exhibitionism, extortion of bribes, protection of vice, acceptance of commissions for services rendered); employment of power to force others to conform to personal ethical or religious convictions; suppression of rivals (e.g., purges); oppression of opponents; nepotism; protection of vested interests; etc. See also:

Organized vice 649
Political machines 667
Religious persecution 708

4: Durand G43 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

644 been melted down to find metal for it. The Thum of the day was so pleased at possessing it that he at once killed the maker, lest he should go to Nagar and make one there. The Wazir had instructions from his King to go on firing till further orders, but after twenty-three guns we thought they had had enough, and I sent a request that they would stop and let us proceed. We were met at the gate of the fort by Wazir Dadu, rather a pleasant-looking man of about forty-five.

[361] The approach to the fort through the village was
643 much the same as at Nagar, but the road was broader. As we passed over the great water channel which fertilises the Hunza oasis, and which at its débouchere from the parent ravine runs through a low tunnel, an ominous whisper informed me that this was the scene of the old Thum's murder by his rascally son, assisted by his present Wazir, Dadu. The old man was fired at from the roof of a house as he rode in from hawking. The first discharge was not fatal, and the men with the Thum begged him to take refuge for a moment in the irrigation tunnel while they raised help, which, by all accounts, was within an ace of coming, but the old Chief refused, saying, "It was no use; he had lived long enough, and his day was
661 come." His Wazir, Humayum, Dadu's elder brother, was away in Gujhal at the time, and the new Chief sent him an urgent letter, stamped with his father's seal, calling him to return at once to Hunza. But though the letter had been prepared beforehand, was sealed before the warmth was out of the old Chief's body, and was despatched by a trusted messenger, the plot failed. Warned by some friend, or distrusting

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV 7

the wording of the letter, Humayum turned his horse's head, and rode for his life. He reached the passes in safety, and going by Wakhan, entered Chitral, and claimed the hospitality of the Mehtar. This was gladly accorded him, for he was a valuable man in case of trouble with Hunza, and he remained in Chitral, an honoured guest, until his turn came later.

Once inside the fort we had only two sets of stairs to ascend, and they were not so primitive as in Nagar, though they were equally defensible. We were received by the Thum at the top, and seated on an open platform overlooking the village and valley. Safdar Ali Khan was a delicate-looking young man of about twenty-two, with shifty Mongolian eyes, and a chestnut-coloured small peaked beard and moustache. The face was a delicate oval in shape, and weak in expression. He was looking decidedly ill, and considerably pulled down by fever.

The surroundings were richer than in Nagar. A guard of fifteen men armed with breechloaders, English and Russian, surrounded the Chief; the courtiers were better dressed, and good Central Asian carpets were spread on the ground. The Thum himself was handsomely dressed in silks, and wore a beautiful velvet belt of Chinese workmanship, with clasps and bosses of gold studded with torquoise and coral. We stayed but a short time, paying a purely ceremonial visit. On my return to camp I found that the four men of my guard had been prevented from coming upstairs, and that an attempt had been made at stopping my orderlies also. I accordingly at once sent up to the Wazir, and protested against this, saying that I con-

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

a *volte-face* on the part of the Chief, who was probably now cursing those who had counselled him to violence, and in whose fickle and unstable mind the advantages of being well with us were now in the ascendant. My reply to his letter was very much to the point, and the result was a complete climb-down on the part of the Thum, abject apologies and profuse protestations of loyalty to the engagements lately taken. I attached the proper value to his vows, but left the country feeling that, at all events for that year, there would be no further trouble, and that Younghusband's safe passage was assured.

We all liked what we saw of the Hunza people; they were cheery and pleasant and civil as we passed through their villages. The leaders were scoundrels. Dadu and his son had fired the first shots at the old Thum, while the contemptible young parricide who succeeded cowered in a room below them. The moment the old man was dead Safdar Ali entered the fort, seized the wife of one of his father's chief adherents, and murdered his three younger brothers. Two were strangled and cut to pieces, the third was taken to the edge of the cliff, on which the fort stands, and hurled over. He was a mere boy, and only asked that he might be thrown into the water, not on to the rocks; his prayers were unheeded. Safdar Ali's description of the circumstances attending his accession was contained in a letter to Government which ran somewhat as follows: "By the will of God my father and I fell out; he died suddenly, and I have ascended the throne." The old Thum, with all his villainy, had been a man, and I found traces, even during my short visit to Hunza, of deep discontent

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir AV1
Burusho AV7

the attention accordingly. Our little expedition had the best effect on the troops. On our return to Gilgit it was much discussed, and I heard with satisfaction that the Governor himself, in an assembly of the senior officers at his house, had pointed the moral. "Which of you," he said, "would have remained out in the sun on the march, and come into camp with the men? Not one. You would have all ridden on and made yourselves comfortable in camp, and left the men to look after themselves. It is the same all through; no wonder that the 'ikbal' (the fortune) of the English Government is great, and that they rule India."

In the beginning of May, as the snow was now melting and the forests were approachable, we began to fell timber, and to bring it down for the new quarters being built for the troops. The labour was very severe, for the mountain torrents were too violent to admit of floating logs down, and the whole of the wood had to be carried for ten miles by the men. The work was hardly completed by the autumn. We found good timber and a site for a summer camp a couple of hours' ride from my house, up a narrow valley at the head of which was a pass leading to Darel. I went up there one day in May to look at the timber, and to see if we could manage to erect a saw-mill, for we had nothing of the kind, and all sawing had to be done by hand. On my way down I heard that the expected storm had broken in Nagar.

The old chief of Nagar had a favourite son named Gauri Tham, who was married to the daughter of the Raja of Astor. I had met the boy there,

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir
Burusho AV7

661 and he had been a good deal in Gilgit. He was a very bright cheery fellow of about nineteen, a capital polo player, and we were all fond of him. To my sorrow I heard that he and a younger brother had just been murdered by their elder brother, Uzr Khan. They lived in a village at the lower end of the Nagar valley, given them by their father to keep them out of Uzr Khan's way, and to enable them to reach the frontier quickly in case of trouble, and Gauri Tham had left his home on a visit to his old father. Half way between his village and Nagar is the Yol Parri, a piece of road which runs across a shingle slope some three thousand feet in height, at the far end of which the path rises through a tangle of rocks to the cultivated plateau. As Gauri Tham reached the rocks he called out to the man behind him that he smelt a burning matchlock fuze; he pulled up his pony and tried to turn, but the beast was awkward, and before he got him round he was shot dead. The pony breaking loose galloped home, and the younger brother, who was outside the village gate at the moment, caught him. Seeing blood on the saddle he jumped on the pony's back, and started to ride for his life towards the frontier. But Uzr Khan's plans were well laid, and he was at once surrounded and stopped. Seeing that all was over he threw himself off, tore open his shirt, and called on his murderers to complete their work. In another moment he was dead.

I felt the murder deeply, for, at the old chief's request, I had advised Gauri Tham to return to Nagar territory some months before. I had known for some

4: Durand G-3 (1888-93) 1900 AV1 Kashmir AV1
Durand AV7

B 661 time that Uzr Khan was desperately jealous of the boy, who was his father's favourite, and very popular with the people, that he hated his brother with added bitterness for his popularity with us, and that in his ignorant and suspicious mind lurked the fear that on the old chief's death we should support his young brother, should he attempt to gain possession of the little kingdom. Yet I had been obliged to advise the boy to act as his father wished, and this was the result.

K 712 The murder did not affect the position on the frontier, but the news which came at the same time that I heard of it did so very seriously. Twelve miles beyond Nomal lay Chalt, a small fort held by Kashmir troops under an agreement with the Nagar Chief. Close to it lay Chaprot, in which also there was a detachment of Kashmir troops.

B 662 721 Uzr Khan was now collecting his forces, and preparing to attack both Chalt and Chaprot. He would have moved the moment the murder was committed, but that he was not quite sure of what his father would do, and that he was in correspondence with the Hunza Chief and not in complete accord with him. Two young nephews of his were in Hunza, and he had sent to the Thum and asked that they might also be killed. The Hunza Chief had declined; he was apparently of opinion that they might be useful later in case of trouble with Nagar, being nearer in succession than Uzr Khan, and, moreover, they were his sister's boys. So he declined with indignation, and relations for a few days were strained between the two scoundrels.

K 678 721 There was not much time to think; moreover, I naturally had in mental pigeon-holes plans to